

A TRIBUTE TO OUR PIONEERS

Pioneers were wonderful people, on whom God's spirit moved;
Changing challenging wastelands into beauty all approved.
On July twenty-fourth eighteen hundred forty-seven,
The Mormon Pioneers found an earthly haven.

"This is the place," their leader said.
They didn't argue, they went to work instead.
After years of toil unceasing, much hardship and faith
They needed cotton for clothing, for more tests they must brace.

There were a lot of colonies, strung south along the road
To make better connections, new things to lift their load.
In one such settlement cotton was found to grow,
So families must go southward to plant it row on row.

The ones who were chosen took the challenge to heart,
Accepted the sacrifice with a wish to do their part;
Families were sometimes divided on the sense of such a choice,
But Father held the right there, the Priesthood was the voice.

They came in covered wagons, some open ones came too;
The women and the children prayed that they would make it through.
Roads were hot and dusty with every wheel's turn,
The wind swept o'er the desert, making them for safety yearn.

The wheels dipped into powdery earth, carried dust on its outer rim,
Trickled down the spokes or blew to ankles slim.
Then there was the river, to be forded at every turn,
And so, along the Virgin, prayers and patience did they learn.

At last they found an oasis amid the burning sand,
Old St. Thomas held a promise, faith in cotton-growing land.
Horses must have hay, and they'd brought along a cow,
Wheat was planted too, they must have bread somehow.

Fathers were real busy plowing up the fertile soil,
Mothers and the children often made the 'dobe pile;
The sun would surely dry it, really bake it to a turn,
They trampled the mud barefooted, so a cozy home they'd earn.

They worked and played together, that gallant Pioneer band,
And now their great-grandchildren are scattered o'er the land.
Because of heavy taxes, charged them by two states,
These peaceful beginnings were abandoned, history relates.

All but one family started north, along that sandy road.
At the road-forks a few went south to find a new abode,
The barefoot boys who drove the cows, walked into Alamo,
But most of them trailed back to Utah to make another home.

Many grew tired, impatient, lost their faith along Life's road;
But many souls remembered, hoping all would turn as it should;
Thus we know those scattered pilgrims were tried unceasingly,
And their God, of them is mindful when they reach Eternity.

—Priscilla Lyman Rice



A PIONEER AND INDIAN WAR VETERAN

Another aged pioneer, a stalward veteran too,
Has gone to meet his old time friends, those friendships to renew.
He has lived some over four score years, a long and useful life,
And raised a noble family, along with his good wife.
He was a true and valiant man, a real old pioneer,
Who shared in all the dangers of those who settled here.
He was one of the brave Veterans of the Brigham Young Express
Called out to guard the mail route, and immigrants coming West.
He was one of the first settlers in pleasant Charleston.
And helped to make the desert bloom by labors gladly done,
He also was a veteran of the Black Hawk Indian War
And like others got a pension from Uncle Sam therefore.

*"Bagley
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He was a kind and loving husband, a loving father too.
A peaceful pleasant neighbor from every point of view.
A man of faith shown by his works through all these many years
He tried to live the laws of God while in this mortal sphere.
For him we have no cause to mourn, he's free from pain and grief
And death to him has surely brought a happy sweet relief.
Many those who knew his worthy life, his virtues emulate,
And make their record here on earth before it is too late.
His comrades of the Indian Wars will miss his presence here
But hope to meet with him again in a high and holy sphere.

Written on death of William Henry Bagley
-by William Lindsey

